

## Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC033367        |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 25/02/2013      |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Stella Lovie    |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Interim         |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 22/11/2012 |
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## Service information

### Brief description of the service

The children's home is provided by a local authority and cares for up to six young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Good progress</b>         | The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the large majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection. |
| <b>Satisfactory progress</b> | The children's home has maintained quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.                                  |
| <b>Inadequate progress</b>   | The children's home has failed to address one or more requirements and/or has not met the majority of recommendations and/or the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people have declined since the last full inspection.                            |

## Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **satisfactory progress**.

The home had its full inspection in November 2012 when the overall effectiveness was found to be inadequate. Eleven requirements to improve were made. All of these have been met to an adequate degree at the point of the interim inspection. There were three recommendations to improve the quality of care, and most of these have been achieved. There was a monitoring visit to the home in January 2013, and one further requirement was made on this occasion. This requirement has been met.

Young people's educational attendance continues to be good. Most young people are making satisfactory progress towards the desired academic achievements. Health outcomes for young people are now monitored closely and they are all registered with a general practitioner. Their health needs have been re-assessed since the last inspection and health action plans have been put in place. This includes active encouragement by staff to undertake smoking cessation programmes. There has been some limited success with this. Similarly, staff and external professionals are proactive in helping young people to address substance misuse. However, it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of these interventions, and some young people continue to use illegal substances and to refuse the support on offer. Other young

people report anxiety about living alongside destructive behaviours associated with this substance misuse. This means that sometimes their sense of well-being and safety is compromised. Nevertheless, young people report that they enjoy living in the home. As one young person said: 'It's brilliant here. Staff are easy to talk to if I'm worried about anything. I used to go missing loads but I don't do that anymore.'

Since the last inspection, external youth workers have been to speak with young people about interesting activities they can take part in with a view to addressing social inclusion and constructive community involvement. It is not yet possible to evaluate whether this is having any positive impact on young people's friendships in the area. Some young people still associate with unsuitable individuals linked with risk-taking activities. This continues to have negative consequences for some young people in the home, and for neighbours in the locality.

There have been no restraints and very few sanctions since the last inspection. However, the recording of sanctions does not always contain enough detail to give a full account of the event. This makes it difficult to fully assess any trends and patterns in the measures of control used. Occasions when young people have gone missing from the home have reduced in frequency and severity. This demonstrates some improvement in the promotion of young people's safety. There is now a more thorough approach to the management of allegations and serious complaints. However, recording is still not fully compliant with statutory guidance.

The interior of the home has benefited considerably from a programme of re-decoration and maintenance. This is on-going and young people are involved in decisions about furniture and colour choices. This helps them to feel valued. The home's fire safety arrangements have been improved with new fire doors and by a more assertive approach by staff to reduce the frequency of smoking in bedrooms.

The home has undergone a period of change in the last few months with a succession of different management arrangements. This has not always promoted cohesion and consistency. A new and experienced manager has very recently been appointed. He has yet to make an application to Ofsted to become the Registered Manager but intends to do so very shortly. He is well-supported by a strong strategic senior management drive to improve the quality of care and outcomes for young people in the home. This includes the provision of additional resources, such as a residential services development officer alongside a clear development plan for the home. These support the new manager in monitoring and sustaining improvements in standards of care for the young people.

All staff now receive regular supervision but they do not all sign to confirm this. The staff training records presented for the inspection still do not show adequate evaluation or updating. This means it is difficult to establish if all staff are up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments to meet the needs of the young people.

The home has made satisfactory progress in tackling the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. While there are some improvements in the quality of

care and outcomes, there remain significant challenges regarding risk-taking behaviour by some young people.

## Areas for improvement

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

| Reg.          | Requirement                                                                                                                           | Due date   |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 17B<br>(2001) | ensure that a written record of any measure of control includes the date and time of the use of the measure. (Regulation 17B (3) (d)) | 25/04/2013 |

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children's safety and welfare is promoted in the home, with particular regard to effective management of behaviour associated with substance mis-use (NMS 4.1)
- ensure that the learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness and is up-dated as necessary, with particular regard to refresher training (NMS 18.2)
- ensure that the supervision record is signed by the member of staff at the end of supervision (NMS 19.5)
- ensure that the home follows the framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (revised in March 2010), with particular regard to providing children with a written explanation of the outcome of enquiries. (NMS 20.5)

## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the progress made by the provider since the last full inspection, identifies any further strengths, any areas for improvement and makes judgements as outlined in the *Inspection of children's homes – framework for inspection*.